

NSC BRIEFING

21 November 1958

SOVIET CIVIL DEFENSE

I. At my last briefing on this subject in March I presented a report with these conclusions:

A. The Soviet shelter construction program has reflected a sustained effort and will probably be continued.

B. Although no firm estimate can be made of the number of persons afforded shelter protection, we believe at least 10 to 15 million, and possibly more, of the urban population of 74 million are afforded varying degrees of protection.

II. These conclusions are still believed valid

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III. New intelligence on shelter construction includes:

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1. The first section of the Kiev subway will be opened in 1960, with one station described as "deepest" in USSR; there is a good chance the plans provide for shelter use.

- B. Construction of several air raid bunkers in Riga has been confirmed by new information.
- C. Single reports of underground headquarters in Vilnius and Lvov have been received, and an underground headquarters for the USSR government has again been reported outside Moscow.
- D. Soviet civil defense publications recently received continue to stress the value of basement shelters--"the protective structures which serve the greatest masses of the people."
- E. Meanwhile, confirmation of shelter construction in the Satellites continues to come in.
1. The head of civil defense in Poland stated publicly this year that "many" shelters had been built, and the Polish radio has complained of "thousands" of cases of vandalism and theft in air raid shelters.

IV. Other indications of Soviet emphasis on civil defense :

- A. A first Deputy Minister of MVD for Civil Defense (i.e., MPVI "Local Anti-Air Defense") was mentioned this summer--the highest rank ever noted for a Soviet civil defense official.

- C. Tied with an accelerated civilian training program, reports of air raid drills in 1956-1958 have now been received from 12 widely scattered Soviet cities.

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